

DRAFT

West Virginia Cooperative Forest Health Protection Program Review

December 14, 2006

Participants

USDA Forest Service

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Daniel Twardus, Group Leader, FHP
Robert Accivatti, Entomologist
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WVDA

Gary Gibson, Director
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Karen Kish, Entomologist
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Quentin Sayers, Gypsy Moth Suppression Program Manager

WVDoF

Randy Dye, State Forester

USDA APHIS

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Agenda

Organizational Structure

Review CFHP Program activities with CFHP Advisory Committee
Planned 2007 CFHP Program activities with CFHP Advisory Committee
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1. Organizational Structure chart
2. 2006 Survey Summaries
3. 2007 Survey Plans

The CFHP Program review was conducted jointly with the WVDA CFHP Advisory Committee meeting. The CFHP Advisory Committee was initiated in 1991 by the WVDA to serve as an annual input gathering effort to encourage participation by stakeholders in the formation of CFHP Program survey priorities and sharing results of previous pest surveys. The CFHP Advisory Committee consists of Federal agencies, State agencies, industry, and West Virginia University. The WVDA CFHP Advisory Committee is the only Advisory Committee formed for this purpose in the Northeastern Area.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure charts are found in Appendix 1. The West Virginia Cooperative Forest Health Protection Program (WVCFHP) is administered through the West Virginia Department of Agriculture – Plant Industries Division. Though most CFHP programs are within the administration of the State Forester, this one is not. Within the Plant Industries Division, the WVCFHP Program is administered by an Assistant Director and includes responsibility for both CFHP and the Cooperative Gypsy Moth Program. An additional Assistant Director within Plant Industries is responsible for Agriculture Pest Surveys. The placement of the CFHP program within this Division of the Department of Agriculture provides access to varied and related expertise thereby strengthening the CFHP program. The West Virginia CFHP Program itself is conducted by its Assistant Director, a Program manager for the CFHP Program and a Program manager for the Gypsy Moth Program. A full-time forest entomologist and a full-time forest pathologist function within the CFHP Program. Both are degreed professionals. Geographic Information Systems specialists (2) are also available with the CFHP Program. And, an Administrative Assistant reports to the Assistant Director.

Overall, this is undoubtedly one of the strongest CFHP programs in the nation by virtue of both its full-time professional expertise within the Program, and its placement within the Division providing access to additional resources and expertise within the Gypsy Moth Program and the Pest Survey Program.

Program Activities

Survey activities account for the bulk of the WVCFHP program and those for 2006 are included in Appendix 2. In 2006, survey activities included:

- WVDA participation in the cooperative USDA Forest Service pilot stream sampling surveys for *Phytophthora* species linked to sudden oak death. The WVDA forest pathologist has participated in USDA FS planning meetings for these surveys and is responsible for conducting the surveys for the second year.
- For the fourth year, WVDA participated in the national Sudden Oak Death Survey. In 2006, this included 62 sample locations within the State. The WVDA forest pathologist has participated in USDA FS planning meetings for these surveys.

- In 2006, WVDA participated in State-wide dogwood anthracnose surveys in cooperation with the USDA FS.
- From 1994 to 2003, WVDA has conducted numerous surveys to detect changes in the incidence of Beech bark disease within the State.
- The WVDA hemlock woolly adelgid efforts consist of: detection surveys, monitoring plots, biological control, and chemical treatments. These efforts have been undertaken at varying degrees since 1992. In 2004, in cooperation with the USDA FS, WVDA initiated an aggressive effort to treat high value and high visibility HWA infested trees with a combination of soil and stem injection. The WVDA forest entomologist has participated in planning meetings with the USDA FS as part of these efforts.
- WVDA has participated with the USDA FS in conducting detection surveys for emerald ash borer. In 2006, surveys were conducted in high risk and areas of ash decline under the direction of the WVDA forest entomologist.
- In 2006, WVDA cooperated with the USDA FS to begin detection surveys for the siricid wood wasp.
- In 2006, WVDA initiated Early Detection and Rapid Response surveys for exotic bark beetles as part of a multi-state detection effort. This required coordination between the WVDA forest entomologist and the USDA FS.
- The USDA FS cooperative gypsy moth suppression program is a separate grant process from the CFHP program but within WVDA both programs are administered by one Assistant Director. The West Virginia gypsy moth suppression program is operated as a county-state-landowner cooperative effort. Participation by landowners is voluntary and involves cost-sharing. The program has operated since 1983 and is one of most novel and efficient programs in the East. The Gypsy Moth Program has a separate Program Manager and can involve upwards of 20 additional personnel to function. Since 1982, nearly 2 million acres have been treated within this Program to prevent tree loss. WVDA also participates in the USDA FS gypsy moth Slow-the Spread Program.
- Surveys in response to requests by landowners, Christmas tree growers, and communities are conducted by the CFHP Program. These have included hazard tree examinations, urban tree problems, and reports of miscellaneous pest problems such as eastern tent caterpillar, locust leaf miners, cherry scallop shell moth, and anthracnose.
- WVDA operates a pest diagnostic laboratory to support its survey and detection efforts.
- WVCFHP personnel participate in coordination meetings as requested by the USDA FS as part of the CFHP program. These have included: State Cooperator meetings including those for gypsy moth suppression coordination, Forest Health Monitoring Workshops, and various professionally related conferences such as Hemlock woolly adelgid symposiums, Forest Pest Insect Work Conferences, and Pathology Workshops.
- WVDA has organized a CFHP Advisory Committee consisting of Federal, State, Industry, and University representatives to gather input for its pest survey program. This Committee meets on an annual basis.

Planned 2007 Activities

The narrative of WVCFHP Program planned activities for 2007 is included as Appendix

2. The objectives for the Program are:

- 1) To conduct surveys, improve methodology and to report information.
- 2) To provide training to Division field agents and State forestry personnel.
- 3) To meet national Forest Health Monitoring survey and mapping standards.
- 4) To assist the gypsy moth suppression program.

For 2007, WVDA lists as high priority for surveys: sudden oak death, bacterial leaf scorch, hardwood declines, Christmas tree pests, gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, siricid wood wasps, loopers, and exotic bark beetles.

The WVDA has and plans to continue conducting surveys in support of export certification for USDA-APHIS.

Results of all surveys are forwarded to the State Forester and the USDA FS.

Areas of cooperation and coordination

In 2007, WVDA will participate in several multi-state survey efforts organized by the USDA FS. These include surveys for hemlock woolly adelgid, gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, sudden oak death, and exotic bark beetles. Other areas of collaboration with outside agencies have included:

- The Gypsy Moth Damage Assessment Report 2005 was completed in cooperation with WVDOT, USDA-FS, and WVU.
- The WVDA Pest Identification Lab and other specialists regularly receive and process specimens sent by WVDOT service foresters and WVU Extension Service.
- The WVDA lends GIS support to the WVDOT by generating maps at their request.
- WVDA personnel present current pest information at educational functions put on by other agencies including the WVDOT and WVU Extension Service.
- In March 2006, the WVDA sent a hemlock priority survey to state park and state forest superintendents, county extension agents, conservation districts, and personnel associated with USDA-APHIS, USDA-FS, USDA-NRCS, USFWS, USDI-NPS, WVU Division of Forestry, WVU Division of Plant and Soil Sciences, WVDOT, WVDNR, the Natural Heritage Program, WV Division of Culture and History, and the WVDNR. Results were incorporated into the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Management Plan.
- Each year, the WVDA consults the WVDNR and USFWS when preparing the biological evaluation for the hemlock woolly adelgid and gypsy moth suppression programs.
- Several agencies have given the WVDA permission to conduct surveys and treatments. For example, the 2006 EAB trap tree survey was conducted with permission from the WVDOT to establish trap trees along highway corridors. WVDNR gives permission to conduct gypsy moth egg mass surveys and treat when appropriate on state parks and wildlife management areas using limited funding provided by the legislature.

- The Early Detection / Rapid Response program for exotic bark beetles was accomplished through coordination between USDA-FS, USDA-APHIS and WVDA.
- The WVDOP permits the WVDA to use their radio repeater system. The WVDA has purchased a repeater to be placed in the Grant/Mineral County area to expand WVDOP coverage.
- The WVDA met with WVDOP and USDA-APHIS on December 4, 2006 to discuss new EAB quarantine regulations and plan upcoming activities.
- The WVDA is currently working with representatives from the WVDOP and USDA-FS on a Forest Land Enhancement Practice (FLEP) for gypsy moth control. The WVDA is currently working with the WVDOP, USDA-FS, USDA-APHIS
- The WVDA is currently working with the WVDOP, USDA-FS, USDA-APHIS, WV Extension and State Parks on an EAB Action Plan.
- The WVDA meets biannually in Flatwoods with other agencies such as: USDA-FS, WVDOP, WVDNR and the Nature Conservancy for the West Virginia Invasive Species Working Group meeting.
- The WVDA helped plan and participated in an Invasive Plants Workshop held at the National Conservation Training Center in August 2005.

Education and Outreach

The WVDA CFHP Program has a vigorous and diverse effort of information, education, and outreach. These activities have included:

- The WVDA creates and distributes a yearly Cooperative Forest Health Protection Calendar. This innovative method of providing forest pest information of particular interest to the State of West Virginia is well-done and popular.
- WVDA specialists prepare timely articles for the *Market Bulletin* and participate in interviews for television, radio and newspaper. The *Market Bulletin* is a popular source of information for the public with an interest in agriculture or natural resources.
- The WVDA sends Pest Alerts and other literature to state parks and forests, land owners, and WVU Extension agents.
- WVDA personnel present forest insect and disease information at various functions throughout the year. Presentations in 2006 included Forest Industries Camp, Joint Forest Pathology Workshop, Cathedral Woods Walk, WVDOP Meeting, Crummies Creek Field Day for Invasive Species, and the Christmas Tree Grower's Association Meeting.
- The WVDA creates educational displays which are presented at fairs and other events including Agriculture Day at the Capitol, The Forest Festival, and The WV State Fair.
- WVDA specialists process specimens sent by landowners and make house calls to diagnose tree problems and assess hazard trees.
- Selected pest alerts and gypsy moth egg mass request forms are available on the WVDA website.
- The WVDA is currently creating an interactive display to be used at fairs and festivals. The display will eventually be available to the public online.

- The WVDA held Gypsy Moth Scoping Sessions for proposed pheromone flake treatments with WVU Extension for the public in Mercer and Jackson Counties.

Working relationships and reporting

The WVDA CFHP Program has maintained excellent working relationships with the USDA FS office in Morgantown. Personnel between the two staffs interact frequently, participate jointly in surveys of mutual interest, and communicate often about plans, survey results, and potential pest problems.

WVDA CFHP Program personnel have excellent working relationships with CFHP Program staffs in other states.

WVDA maintains a good working relationship with the WV Division of Forestry. The co-location of the WVDA offices with the WV Division of Forestry offices enhances the relationship.

Accomplishment reporting as required by participation in the USDA FS CFHP Program are pest conditions narratives and maps, forest health highlights, and financial status reports. Required reporting dates for these products are listed each year in the WV CFHP Program narrative. WVDA always meets its reporting requirements. Annual survey summaries with excellent narratives and maps are also provided to the Advisory Committee and the USDA FS.

Title VI

It is the WVDA's policy to employ, retain, promote, discharge, and otherwise treat equally any and all employees and job applicants on the basis of merit, qualifications, and competence. This policy shall be applied without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, disability (including blindness), medical condition, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, or any other protected status defined by law.

WVDA supports merit opportunity concepts by insuring that all segments of the community have an opportunity to enter employment on the basis of open competition, and to advance according to their relative ability and fitness.

The selection of prospective new employees and the selection of employees for promotion shall be impartial, objective, and of a practical nature. The process shall relate to the job content in a way that fairly and accurately measures the applicant's capability to perform the job.

The employment, promotion, and employment separation of Executive staff, Division

Directors, and part-time employees are not applicable to the Equal Employment policy, except that all personnel actions regarding these groups shall be taken without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, disability (including blindness), medical condition, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, or any other protected status defined by law.

WVDA has assured the USDA FS that the services, information, outreach, and benefits of the WV CFHP Program are available to all citizens of the State of West Virginia without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

Recommendations and Commendations

1. The WVDA CFHP Program is well organized, professionally strong, and responsive. The placement of the CFHP Program within the Departments' Plant Industries Division affords the Program access to additional expertise and resources that other CFHP Programs do not always have so readily. The WV CFHP Program itself consists of a well trained and responsive staff.
2. One of the important aspects of the CFHP Program in any State is its responsiveness to the needs of the State Forester. While the WV CFHP Program appears to have a good working relationship with the WV Division of Forestry, one area that may enhance its working relationship is a more concerted attempt to provide forest pest related information and training to Forestry Division personnel. The 2007 narrative for the CFHP Program lists only 'training when needed' for foresters and stewardship certification. It may be more appropriate for the WV CFHP Program to seek out and recommend training opportunities for Forestry Division personnel. In addition, a representative of the CFHP Program should attend Forestry Division staff meetings on a regular basis.
3. The WV CFHP Program should continue to make efforts to work with Cooperative Extension within the State. Making personal contacts, attending Extension public sessions, and providing Extension with CFHP pest related information that may be appropriate for landowners should be enhanced.
4. The WVDA CFHP Program Advisory Committee is an excellent attempt on the part of the Program to gather input and share information.
5. The WVDA CFHP Program calendar is an excellent vehicle for the dissemination of forest pest related information.
6. The WVDA CFHP Program is commended for its efforts in participating in national and regional forest pest related workshops and meetings. These are good venues for gathering new information and add to the training opportunities for CFHP personnel.
7. WVDA CFHP personnel are recognized as experts in their respective fields and in total is a valuable resource for the State. The WVDA CFHP Program is one of the leading Programs in the Nation in terms of skills, organization, and effectiveness.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry

180 Canfield Street
Morgantown, WV 26505-3101

File Code: 3400

Date: January 11, 2007

Mr. Charles Dye
West Virginia Division of Forestry
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25305-0191

Dear Randy:

Enclosed is a draft documenting the recent Cooperative Forest Health Protection Program review conducted in December of last year. Since you are a major stakeholder in the functioning of this program and because you participated in the actual review, it would be helpful for you to comment on our summary and conclusions.

I think you will find the review summary fairly straight-forward though I would ask you pay particular attention to number 2 in the recommendations. Any comments you have will be helpful and we will take into consideration any recommendations or commendations you would offer.

Thank-you,

DANIEL B. TWARDUS
Acting Field Representative
State and Private Forestry, Northeastern Area
Morgantown Field Office

Enclosure

Cc: Jerry Boughton

